

MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY			
MEETING OF THE:	SCRUTINY COMMITTEE		
DATE:	22 JULY 2025	REPORT NO:	CFO/04/2526
PRESENTING OFFICER	ASSISTANT CHIEF FIRE OFFICER, GED SHERIDAN		
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	AREA MANAGER, CHRIS BARRETT	REPORT AUTHOR:	GROUP MANAGER, CRAIG WHITFIELD
OFFICERS CONSULTED:	HEALTH & SAFETY, STRATEGY & PERFORMANCE, LEGAL SERVICES, HS&W COMMITTEE, STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP TEAM		
TITLE OF REPORT:	ANNUAL HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELFARE REPORT 2024/25		

APPENDICES:	APPENDIX A	Annual Health, Safety & Welfare Report 2024/25
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Purpose of Report

1. To request that Members note and scrutinise the content of the Annual Health, Safety and Welfare (HS&W) report which details the performance of Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service (MFRS) against its Local Performance Indicators (LPI's) for Health and Safety (H&S) during 2024/25.

Recommendation

2. It is recommended that Members note the performance related contents of the report which highlights the positive progress and safety culture within MFRS. This may be compared to the previous year's report.

Introduction and Background

3. The Annual HS&W Report ensures that Members are informed in regard to HS&W performance and can be assured of compliance with corporate policy, legal and performance requirements.
4. This report has been prepared using data from the Authority's Health, Safety & Welfare Management System; OSHENS.
5. The Authority's HS&W Committee meet on a quarterly basis, and membership includes a Principal Officer Chair (ACFO Sheridan), representative bodies, senior managers, department heads and a member of the Fire Authority. The LPI's for HS&W are jointly reviewed and scrutinised at each meeting with actions taken to maintain or improve performance. Sub-meetings such as Workplace Review Group, Road Risk review Group and Legal meetings also contribute to the overall H&S performance.

6. LPI's are set by the H&S Manager on behalf of the Authority, and in line with the Authority's service plan. The figures are drawn from empirical data and statistics and are approved and governed through the Performance Management Group (PMG).
7. It should be noted that when reviewing this data, training, Prevention, Protection and Response activity remains high which is referred to in the main report.
8. A brief overview of the 2024/25 LPI performance for Members to note is contained in the following sections.

Staff injuries

- i. An overview of LPI performance is shown below. Performance is Red, Amber, Green (RAG) rated with Green identifying positive performance.

LPI	Predicted Annual Performance	Actual Annual Performance	RAG Rating
WR13	47	38	G
WR33	21	12	G
WR34	12	9	G
WR22	22	17	G

- ii. All operational staff injuries: (WR13)

There were 38 injuries to operational staff during 2024/25, a reduction of 1 from the previous year. 16 of the 38 recordings (42%) were attributed to sprains/strains, identified as the most common injury.

- iii. Injuries at operational incidents (WR33)

MFRS attended 17,798 operational incidents in 2024/25, which was supported by 33,273 appliance movements.

12 injuries occurred at incidents, the same as the previous year. Of the 12 injured, 4 staff members went off duty however, 2 returned within 7 days and the remaining 2 also returned to work following longer term sickness periods.

The total duty days lost for operational staff incurring injuries whilst at incidents was 62 days: a decrease of 138 on the previous year.

- iv. Injuries at risk critical training (WR34)

In 2024/25, examples of training undertaken included 164 core training courses, 251 realistic training / exercising events which is 14 more than the previous year and included 100 multi pump exercises. MFRS also welcomed 28 Apprentice firefighters.

9 individuals were injured during risk critical training which is an increase of 2 on the previous year. 3 subsequently went off duty and booked sick.

It should be noted that core training courses were down on the previous year due to the opening of the new Training and Development Academy at Long Lane which required a transition period from the old Storrington Avenue site.

v. Injuries related to staff conducting routine duties (WR22)

There was a total of 17 injuries recorded during routine activity which is a decrease of 3 from the previous year and remains 5 under the LPI target of 22.

Of the 17 individuals who were injured, 10 remained on duty highlighting that their injuries were minor in nature. 7 individuals went off duty resulting in 152 duty days lost. This is mainly attributed to long term absence (>28 days).

vi. Non-operational staff injuries (WR32)

There was a total of 7 non-operational staff injuries in 2024/25, which is a reduction of 3 on the previous year. Of the 7 injuries, 1 staff member went off duty due to a sprain injury. All injuries were classed as minor in nature. This is a monitoring LPI only and not included in the table.

vii. RIDDOR reportable injuries; Major & Minor

There was one RIDDOR reportable 'Major' injury during 2024/25, same as the previous year. 8 'Minor' injuries were reported to the HSE, an increase of 1 from the previous year. The injuries were:

- 5 sprain/strain injuries
- 2 bruising
- 1 pain only

Analysis of statistics shows that there is no significant age group who are receiving more injuries amongst the overall workforce.

9. MFRS accident and injury figures are submitted to the Home Office (HO) annually. The HO collates figures from all FRS's which are published in annual data tables enabling H&S Manager's to measure and benchmark performance nationally. Annual data tables are published in October of each year and therefore are not included in this report. The National benchmarking accident and injury data will be analysed and provided to Authority in a supplementary presentation to support this report.

Dangerous Occurrence

There was one Dangerous Occurrence recorded which occurred during the wearing of Breathing Apparatus (BA) at an Operational Incident. No injuries were incurred in relation to this event. The cause has been investigated and this was

due to debris within the mask which led to the BA defaulting to the free flowing of air (as per its designed safety feature). The BA wearer did not lose air pressure and left the building safely.

Road Traffic Collisions (RTC's) involving Authority vehicles.

MFRA fleet vehicles have covered well in excess of 1 million miles during 2024/25. The following figures include both blue light response fleet vehicles, including routine driving activity:

- i. An overview of LPI performance is shown below. Performance is RAG rated with Green identifying positive performance, Amber to indicate an area for attention and Red as an area for improvement.

LPI	Predicted Annual Performance	Actual Annual Performance	RAG Rating
RR23	72	60	G
RR31	30	29	G
RR32	27	27	G
RR33	Quality Assurance	0	G
RR34	17	4	G
RR35	Quality Assurance	5	G
HBOV	Quality Assurance	15	G

- ii. The total number of RTC's (RR23)

RTC's involving all types of Service vehicles was 60, a reduction of 6 on the previous year and 12 below the LPI target.

- iii. Appliance collisions whilst responding to incidents (RR31)

MFRA fire appliances responded on 33,273 occasions in 2024/25 to 17,798 incidents. This driving activity is deemed as the Services most risk critical category.

There were 29 collisions involving appliances responding under blue lights, the same as the previous year and 1 below target.

The trend for this LPI was moving forward under 10mph with 17 (58%) of the 29 collisions being in this category.

The Service has progressed 53 new EFAD qualified drivers during 2024/25.

- iv. Appliance collision whilst engaged in routine activities/movements (RR32)

MFRA appliances were involved in 63,540 routine movements in 2024/25. This is 2,318 more movements than the previous year.

The total number of appliance collisions whilst engaged in routine activities decreased by 10 to 27 from the previous year. This is in line with the predicted

target. For the upcoming year, H&S will focus on trialling parking sensors, introduce training videos / packages and conduct assurance by audit of reversing and low speed procedures.

The trend for this LPI was moving forward at low speed (<10mph) with 19 (70%) of the 27 incidents falling into this category.

The Service has progressed 48 new LGV drivers into the operational environment during 2024/25. There is no direct correlation between newly qualified drivers and RTC's.

v. Collisions involving light vehicles (RR33 & RR34)

There were 4 light vehicle collisions, a reduction of 3 (75%) on the previous year and 13 below the target of 17.

In analysing the data for trends, 1 of the 4 collisions occurred whilst moving forward (<10mph), and 3 whilst reversing (<10mph).

Collisions involving light vehicles whilst responding e.g. Senior Officer / specialist response, remained at 0 for another consecutive year.

Other vehicle damage whilst MFRS vehicles are stationary (RR35) and Hit by Other Vehicle (HBOV) are both monitoring LPI's only. RR35 has reduced since 2023/24 by 12 occurrences to 5. HBOV has reduced by 6 to 15 since 2023/24.

Near miss reporting (WR31)

123 near miss reports / safety observations were recorded for 2024/25, a small decrease from the previous year of 148. The near miss reporting still reflects:

- Positive reinforcement of Health and Safety Culture across the Service.
- That near misses reduce likelihood of actual events.
- Effective working relationships between departments and functions.

Welfare performance

The Health and Safety department work closely in conjunction with Occupational Health to support the robust welfare arrangements that are in place for members of staff.

MFRS staff operate in diverse roles and not only are required to maintain high levels of fitness but will occasionally be exposed to traumatic situations.

Occupational Health provide mental and physical health support and have the expertise to refer staff to specialist care when appropriate. MFRS utilise Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) trained officers to defuse and debrief staff

following operational exposure to traumatic or difficult experiences and can request further counselling through Occupational Health Services.

As an overview for the period 2024/25, MFRS have completed the following:

Occupational Health Appointments

• Health Screenings	149
• LGV medicals	34
• Early Intervention	248
• Management Referrals	84
• Uniformed pre-employments	72
• Non uniformed pre-employments	51
• Other (Long term sick review/Clinical Check/Other duties reviews etc.)	1149
• Total medical appointments	1787

Other referrals include:

• MRI/Scan Referrals	11
• Physiotherapy appointments	459
• Fitness Tests	551
• Nutritionist appointments	68
• Safety Glasses issued	9
• Eyesight vouchers issued	30
• Ill Health Retirements	3

The CISM mechanism has resulted in the following:

• Critical Incidents (CI) declared	135
• CI Defusing sessions	175
• CI Debriefs (elevated support)	13

The Occupational Health team also provide professionally trained counsellor services, the full detail of which can be found in the main HSW report.

Reducing exposure/contaminants project

10. Reducing exposure to firefighting contaminants is well embedded within H&S and the Service. It forms part of the H&S Functional Plan; has a station manager lead and is constantly developing. Further detail in relation to this area is contained in the annual report.

H&S objectives 2025/26

11. The Health and Safety department will use the findings of the annual report to continue to effectively manage performance and strengthen the positive H&S culture that already exists within the organisation. The detail of the H&S departments future objectives are contained within the full annual report.

Equality and Diversity Implications

12. This report informs the Authority's performance under its HS&W Policy and supporting procedures, which are subject to current Equality Impact Assessments.

Staff Implications

13. All staff are managed under aspects of H&S legislation which requires the employer or employee to fulfil duties against their role. The report is intended to confirm performance only.

Legal Implications

14. The HS&W Report provides evidence of compliance with the 'Health and Safety at Work Act 1974' and Regulations made pursuant to that Act, and other associated H&S legislation.
15. A failure in compliance may lead to a litigation claim with a financial impact on the Authority budget.

Financial Implications & Value for Money

16. The positive work undertaken by the H&S Department affects the amount of litigation and repair costs that the Authority is liable for. In being proactive and working closely with other internal stakeholders in reducing accidents and injuries, it provides a safer work environment and avoids the indirect costs of a poor H&S culture – staff absence, sick pay, legal costs, claims, reputational impacts, etc.

Risk Management and Health & Safety Implications

17. The report is intended to reflect performance of the previous year only. The H&S department continue to maintain workstreams to ensure risk management is suitable and sufficient.

Environmental Implications

18. The report is intended to reflect performance of the previous year only. The H&S department continue to maintain workstreams to ensure risk management is suitable and sufficient.

Contribution to Our Vision: *To be the best Fire & Rescue Service in the UK.*

Our Purpose: *Here to serve, Here to protect, Here to keep you safe.*

19. By ensuring staff are the safest they can be through suitable and sufficient provision of information, instruction, training, and supervision, in line with legal and moral compliance.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

NONE

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

MFRA	M erseyside F ire & R escue A uthority
MFRS	M erseyside F ire & R escue S ervice
H&S	H ealth and S afety
HS&W	H ealth S afety & W elfare
LPI	L ocal P erformance I ndicator
PMG	P erformance M anagement G roup
RAG	R ed, A MBER, G reen
HO	H ome O ffice
RFF	R ecruit F irefighter
CISM	C ritical Incident S tress M anagement